



RED-LETTER PRAYERS, Part 3: Lord Have Mercy

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever said a bad prayer? Many of us feel like we don't pray well. How can we know if God is listening to our prayers? In "The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector," Jesus gives us a prayer we can pray to ensure we know that God is always listening.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Who is the best listener you've ever known? Describe what it's like to have a conversation with that person.
2. Are you a good listener? Are you better at listening to some people than others? If so, why?
3. Read Luke 18:9-14. Do God's different responses to the prayers of the Pharisee and the tax collector seem fair to you? Why or why not?
4. Why is it difficult to believe that God listens to your prayers unconditionally? How has that affected your prayer life?
5. Have you ever avoided prayer because you felt distant from God? Explain.
6. What is one thing you can do to improve your prayer life? How can this group support you?

MOVING FORWARD

Once you believe you have Jesus Christ as your atonement, you don't have to worry about your performance. There's nothing you can add to grace. It's finished. It's over. It's done. Because of Jesus, every time you come to God you can be fully confident he is listening.

This is good news.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.

Luke 18:14b